

## CHARITIES REPORT 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

In the financial year beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 we planned, executed and delivered the following courses, meetings and activities.

During the month of April we engaged with the Local Council, Housing Executive, Fire Brigade and PSNI to discuss the Bonfire Protocol for July 23. This agreement was signed on the 2nd April 2023.

On the 3rd April 2023 we planned and successfully delivered an Easter Camp for children throughout the area. This event was a change from previous Easters when we delivered an Easter Hunt. The Easter Camp event was aimed at bringing back some normality for the children. We ran 2 separate age groups over for children of Primary School age from 1pm to 4pm and for Secondary School age from 6pm to 9pm. To finish off the week we provided bouncy castles and the Easter Bunny as well as goody bags, including an Easter egg for all the children.

The Young Sparks programme for Primary School kids continued with numbers increasing to 20-25 children attending regularly on a Wednesday afternoon.

During the month of May we successfully set up a walking group who get together on a Friday afternoon and pick a different walk to do together. After 4 weeks of taking part in the walk all participants were given a Fitbit watch for their dedication. The 5<sup>th</sup> of May also seen us organise and deliver a community event celebrating the Kings Coronation. The event had 4 inflatables, Dainty Doughnut van, 300 biodegradable balloons, coloured flares, tea/coffee and buffet for adults. We provided party bags for children with over 200 attending. The local community police, Mayor and Local MLA also attended. This event run from 1pm to 4pm with residents and children coming and going throughout.

The month of June seen us start to attend courses run by the council concerning an expression of interest in taking over the Management and running of the community centre. Members of the group also joined the Northern Ireland Housing forum for Newtownabbey. June also seen us organise a separate summer camp for 30 kids that fell into the secondary school age group which would be held daily for 2 weeks over July and August and would take place in Ardnavey Scout Camp.

July 2023 seen us have a fun day on the 11<sup>th</sup> July. This included Bouncy Castles, Dainty Doughnuts, Burger Van, Ice Cream Van, Stalls, Face painter, Stage, DJ and Group. Over 300 kids attended, and each received a party bag. The Summer camp in Ardnavalley started in the Last week of July finishing the first week in August and seen 30 kids attend. Here they took part in learning basic first aid skills, camping skills, and orienteering as well as having fun on the high ropes, target archery and various other activities.

The start of August seen the continuation of the summer camp in Ardnavalley. Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August then seen the start of our Community Summer Scheme which run from the 7<sup>th</sup> August to Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August. The summer scheme consisted of 3 age groups. Ages 4yrs-8yrs, 9yrs-11yrs and 12yrs to 18yrs. We had 30 4-8yr olds, 30 9-11yr olds and 30 12-18yr olds attend. During this period, we had arts & crafts, multisport, days at the park, Movie days, baking, how to make your lunch, Jo Jingles and police talks on road safety for the younger kids and internet safety for the older kids in the centre. Day trips included Glengormley Movie House, Need for Speed Karting and Scrapyard Golf. We also had a night for the youth called Pizza with a Peeler where the youth get to know our local community policing team. On the final day of Summer Scheme, we had a free family day including Marions Diner, Doughnut van, Climbing Wall, Archery, Air Rifle Shooting Range, and Colour Run. Also at the start of August the group met and provided a presentation for funding to the big Lottery representatives with a target of 3 years funding. We also met with representatives from IPB Pride of Place and provided them with a presentation of work we had done in the past, present, and our aims and plans for the future.

During the month of October we planned our annual Halloween disco and Fancy-dress competition with prizes for the best dressed on the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> October from 6pm to 9pm for the younger children. This seen 48 children attend. 50 pumpkins and carving kits were purchased that children picked up from the centre and took home to carve and were returned to the centre on the night of the Halloween disco and prizes given out for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places. All the kids received goody bags and Toffee Apples which were donated by a local business. The night was finished off with a small firework display. We had 8 senior kids help with the junior night. The seniors then had a scary movie night in the centre on 29<sup>th</sup> October with 17 attending. Popcorn sweets and

juice were supplied and donated by a local business. A Chinese takeaway was provided between the movies.

November started with representatives of the group attend The Pride of Place awards which took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> November in The Armagh City Hotel. Our group had been placed in the Estates category of which we were very successful and proud to be placed first overall in the category. We also received confirmation that our application for the SMA to manage and run the Community Centre had been successful and would start from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. November continued with planning our yearly Christmas events for our over 55s and Santas Grotto.

The month of December seen Bryson and ourselves run a Cost-of-Living scheme which involved the distribution of £200 to be used for Electric with service users and those in most need being the primary target. 38 Christmas Dinners were made and served in the centre for the first time on the 15<sup>th</sup> December to the pensioners group with 12 being delivered to those unable to attend. We also had our now annual Santas Grotto was provided for the children in the area on the 18<sup>th</sup> December which run for the full day and seen a footfall of 289 children attend.

January seen us successfully signing our SMA agreement with the council for the coming year as a trial period. We set up a steering group which involves local businesspeople, councillors, Local policing team members, Bryson Pathways, a Primary School principal, residents and 2 members of the group. The steering group would provide guidance and suggestions on how best to spend the money we will receive from the Big Lottery Fund. A meeting also took place between various parties concerning the re-imaging of a wall to remove a paramilitary mural and being replaced by a Somme Memorial mural. We also started to plan events etc. for the coming year.

February seen us have several meetings. The first with our local MLA, council, housing executive and DFI in regard to repairs and a clean-up programme. We also had our first Housing Forum meeting. The meetings continued with a Bonfire Management Programme zoom meeting. We also had our over 55s Boccia group restart. The re-imaging meetings continued with all parties concerned agreeing with the removal of the Paramilitary Mural and replacement with a Somme Mural.

The month of March started with meetings with various representatives of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive concerning a repair and replacement scheme in the area. These meetings were set up in order to help communication between residents and the NIHE with any problems or complaints there were due to the ongoing work. March seen us start an Older and Active group which seen us have 72 people attend over a 4 week period.

Throughout the year members of the group completed the following courses:

Mental Health First Aid FAA Level 3

Fire Warden training

OCN Level 4 in Leadership

OCN Level 2 in Event Management

Preparing Successful Funding Applications

FAA Level 2 in Fire Safety

Risk Assessments

Child Protection Practice Level 2

Suicide Prevention Awareness